

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Divisional of U.S. Application No. 09/920,745

Q76471

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-5 without prejudice or disclaimer.

IN THE ABSTRACT:

Please delete the present Abstract of the Disclosure and replace it with the following new Abstract of the Disclosure.

A method for residual monomer diminution by which a residual monomer is speedily removed from an N-vinyl compound polymer or the like without posing a problem such as an increase in ash content; and a process for producing an N-vinyl compound polymer solution or powder which has a regulated pH and is free from a decrease in pH with time. The method comprises adding an organic acid having a boiling point of 140°C or higher at ordinary pressure to an aqueous solution of an N-vinyl compound polymer. The process comprises adding an organic base to an aqueous N-vinyl compound polymer solution having a pH lower than 7.0 to thereby neutralize the solution and regulate the pH thereof. Those operations are conducted in a reaction vessel in which a gaseous phase is regulated so as to have an oxygen concentration of 5.0% by volume or lower.